

Synopsis of Rights & Responsibilities Identification Report for KFN Monthly Newsletter

Join the KFN Assessment Committee on April 7th at 5 PM at the Community Hall for a presentation and review of KFN's Rights & Responsibilities Identification Report on the Near Surface Disposal Facility (NSDF) project at Chalk River.

The Assessment Committee wants to hear your questions and concerns about the NSDF and your feedback on the Report, to inform KFN's evaluation of the NSDF project and the Free, Prior & Informed Consent (FPIC) process under the Rights & Responsibilities Assessment Law.

What is this meeting about?

On April 7th Council and the Assessment Committee will be holding the first community meeting to present the Rights & Responsibilities Identification Report. The purpose of this report is to:

1. Share project information about the NSDF;
2. Summarize, on an initial basis, the potential impacts to KFN's Rights & Responsibilities through the lens of Algonquin Law;
3. Describe the outstanding issues and remaining gaps that should be addressed in the FPIC process under the Law; and
4. Set out the Assessment Committee's workplan, which will be used to address issues, fill gaps, and evaluate the significance of the NSDF's potential impacts to KFN Rights & Responsibilities, with the ultimate goal of determining whether KFN should grant its FPIC for the project.

How did we get here?

On November 27, 2025, KFN formally ratified its Rights and Responsibilities Assessment Law. The Law sets out a process, grounded in Algonquin laws and knowledge, to assess projects which may impact KFN Territory and to determine whether KFN gives or withholds its Free, Prior, and Informed Consent (FPIC).

The Law will first be applied to Canadian Nuclear Laboratories' (CNL) proposed NSDF project. KFN has been involved in consultation processes about the NSDF with the Canadian Nuclear Safety Commission (CNSC)—the Crown regulator responsible for licencing the Project—since 2016. The CNSC approved the construction of the NSDF in January 2024. KFN challenged this decision in Federal Court on the basis that it violated our right to FPIC. KFN was successful, and the Court ordered CNL, CNSC, and KFN to resume the consultation process to implement the FPIC standard, by adapting the process to address Indigenous laws and knowledge, and to develop a process aimed at reaching mutual agreement.

In response to the Federal Court's decision, Council developed the Rights & Responsibilities Assessment Law—informed by member engagement—to provide an internal, community-based process that allows us to assess projects according to Algonquin laws and knowledge. Under the law, an Assessment Committee, composed of 7 members and including at least one elder,

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land of water use, and woman, youth, administers the Law and coordinates the review of projects.

What are the next steps for the FPIC process?

If you cannot make the community meeting, there will be ongoing opportunities to give your feedback and participate in the FPIC process between now and August. These may include surveys, focus groups, and site visits to the NSDF and nearby sacred sites, among other avenues!

The Assessment Committee will continue its work over the coming months. The evaluation of the NSDF project will be summarized in a second report – the Rights & Responsibilities Assessment Report – which will be presented to members for feedback in the summer.

More information will be shared in upcoming newsletters! If you have any questions about the Report, the NSDF project, or the FPIC process, including future opportunities to participate, please reach out to Kacie McLaren at: kcmlaren@kebaowek.ca or 819-627-3309/6786